

1608/378.

A
LETTER

FROM

IBRAHIM BASSA,

TO

Don Ruperto de Poli, Knt.

OF THE

BLAZING-STAR.

(Price 6 d.)



LETTER

TO

OF THE

BLANKING-STAMP

(1867)

A
L E T T E R
F R O M
I B R A H I M B A S S A,
G R A N D V I S I E R

To the late depos'd

Sultan Achmet,

Who was frangled at the Demand of the
People, for *Male-Administration,*

T O

Don Ruperto de Poli, Knt.

O F T H E

B L A Z I N G - S T A R,

Descended in a right Line from the renown'd *DON*
QUIXOTE DE LA MANCHA, and
Fac-totum to the Island of *Utopia*.

W I T H

Don RUPERTO's Answer ;

Wherein are laid down several Rules, which if any *Minister* observes, he will *aggrandize* both *Himself* and
his *Family*.

L O N D O N:

Printed for, and Sold by *E. Rayner*, next the
George-Tavern, Charing Cross ; and by the
Booksellers of London and Westminster.



ERRATUM.

Page 8. Line 6. for *Aurum Potabile*, read *Aurum Fulminans*.



A
LETTER
FROM
IBRAHIM BASSA,
TO
Don Ruperto de Poli.

From the Banks of Acheron.

Most Illustrious and Thrice Renowned,



S I have been well inform'd,
since my Arrival on this Side
of the *Stygian-Ferry*, that
your EXCELLENCY not
only lives in a perfect good Intelligence
with our *Infernal Monarch*, but that you
B also

also keep a constant Correspondence with him, and never fail sending him Couriers every Week with fresh and minute Accounts of your most important Negotiations ; and as I always was your Admirer in secret, whilst in the upper Regions, and have been long ambitious of having an Intercourse with you by Letters ; having not only esteem'd you the *Mirror of Knighthood*, but even the most refin'd Politician that ever adorn'd any Court, not excepting *Machiavel* himself, or your more renowned Ancestor *DON QUIXOTE DE LA MANCHA* of ever glorious Memory ; I hope it will be neither surprizing nor unwelcome to you to receive an Epistle from these *Dark-Abodes*, where you have been long and impatiently expected.

I must confess it would have been greatly to my Advantage had I establish'd a Correspondence with your EXCELLENCY whilst I was at the Helm of Affairs at the *Ottoman Porte*, inasmuch as had I been instructed by you, it would have prevented my falling a *Sacrifice* to the Fury of a justly incens'd
Populace,



Populace, and hinder'd the *Sultan's* being reduced to the melancholy Necessity of dispatching me, tho' against his Will, to these *Realms of Sorrow*, as an Atonement for my Male-Administration; an *Expedient* to which he never would consent 'till it was too late, which caus'd his being himself depos'd. But alas! What shall I say? In this I was like the *English*, a Nation who are reputed to have a great Deal of *Afterwit*, tho' but very little *Forefight*, which has always made them, 'till of late Years, the *Bubbles* of their Neighbours in all their *Treaties* and *Negotiations*.

I CONCLUDE therefore, that had I been wise enough to have follow'd your Example, I had not only sav'd my own Bacon, but prevented my Master's Fall; for to your immortal Honour be it spoken, tho' never any *Fac-totum* had more Adversaries, or indeed ever deserv'd them more than yourself; tho' never any one was more hated, and, not without Cause, by the People; nay, tho' you have been constantly attack'd every Year by powerful *Antagonists*, who are

Masters of two *Arguments* you never use, I mean *Truth* and *Reason*; you still have had the *Skill*, or good *Fortune* to foil them and lay them upon their Backs, by one irresistible Weapon, called, *Aurum potabile*.

WITHOUT Flattery, Sir, to whom could I more properly have apply'd myself to learn the most consummate Maxims of Government, than to a Gentleman, whose Politicks have for many Years been the Admiration of the whole Universe; a Gentleman, with whose Praises the whole World resounds; in-somuch that your renowned Ancestor, *Don Quixote*, was not more the Delight and Wonder of the Age wherein he liv'd, than you are of the present Times. Thrice happy those who can have access to you, and be admitted to the Conversation of the greatest *Nonpareil*, that even your own Country *Utopia*, which is fruitful of Miracles, ever produced!

I assure your EXCELLENCY,
That amongst the most Submissive of
your Slaves you have not one more zealous,

lous, or more devoted to your Service than my self; and cou'd I have been dispens'd with, whilst alive in my Attendance upon the *Sultan*, neither the Length, nor the Dangers of the Voyage, should have deterr'd me from coming to lay my self at your Feet, and admire your Wisdom and Policy, as the Queen of *Sheba* did King *Solomon's*,

To convince your EXCELLENCY, yet more fully, how inviolably I am attach'd to your Interest, and what a profound Veneration I have for your Person; I cashier'd a saucy *Bassa*, a little before my Fall, for having the Impudence to deny your being descended in a right Line from the illustrious *Don Quixote*; when any one, who will but take the Pains to compare your Achievements and Exploits with those of your famous Ancestor, may see, with half an Eye, that you tread exactly in his Foot-Steps, and have made him the Model of your *Chivalry*.

DID not that noble Knight combat with a Wind-mill? And have not you,
in

in Imitation of your great Predecessor; constantly engaged with Wind-mills of your own raising towards the Beginning of every new Year for these ten Years. Only this must be granted to your Glory, that you have had the good Luck hitherto to come off better than the *Knight of the sorrowful Countenance*. Did not *Don Quixote* encounter with a *Flock of Sheep*? And don't all Mankind allow that you have had nothing but *Sheep* to deal with, or otherwise you had not *escap'd so Scot-free*? Did not the *Manchaneſe* Hero dare a *Lyon* to the Combat with great Intrepidity? And has not your EXCELLENCY done more? Have not you not only subdued *Lions*, but, even tam'd them to that Degree, that you are continually furrounded with them as your Guards? and tho' they lay aside their Fierceness, and fawn upon, and crouch to you like *Dogs*, are they not a perpetual Terror to every one besides, especially every honest Man? Lastly, did not he keep a doughty Squire, whose Name was *Sancho Pancha*, who went of all his Messages and Embassies? And, to your Praise be it mention'd, have not you
sent

(II)

sent a Brace of as doughty Squires upon your Errands, who have acquitted themselves inimitably of their Commissions; tho' it must be confess'd, not quite so well as *Sancho* did in his Government of *Barataria*?

BUT to leave this Digression, and return to your EXCELLENCY, you cannot imagine how great your Reputation is, and how highly you are valued in these subterraneous Dominions: There is not a puny Sprite in all *Pluto's* Territories, but drinks your Health every Day in a Bumper of *Phlegeron*: In short, you are grown the universal Toast of the *infernal Regions*, and 'tis confidently reported, that upon your Arrival in these Parts, you will be immediately made prime Minister to his *Plutonian* Majesty; a Post which has long been enjoy'd by the great *Machiavel*, and in which none can pretend to rival him but yourself.

NOT but that you have some Enemies on this Side the *Styx*, who make no Scruple of abusing and reviling you:

As

As for Example, a late Admiral, who vows to be reveng'd on you, as soon as ever he can lay hold on you, for sending him with his Hands ty'd behind him, on a late memorable Expedition, wherein himself perish'd, with above a Thousand brave Fellows. General *Macario* likewise, (who by the bye has a very considerable Post in the infernal Army) swears that you are the *arrantest Bungler* that ever dealt in *Politicks*, or *Mischief*. For, continues he, tho' I set him the fairest Pattern in the World, when I set two noble Grandees together by the Ears (in order to remove one of them who was a great Eye-sore to our Party) and did the Business effectually; what does this *eternal Blunderer* do in a parallel Case, but employ a Milk-Sop, an effeminate Coxcomb, who was fit for nothing but to suck a Bubby, or play a Game at *Quadrille*, and accordingly the Design miscarry'd? However these Invectives are here look'd upon as nothing but the Cavils of *Male-Contents*, whom *Envy*, *Disappointments*, and a *Spirit of Faction* have provok'd to calumniate and misrepresent your best Actions; and accordingly
their

these malevolent Gentry meet with no better Quarter here, than you would allow to your *factionous Adversaries* in your Island, if you had them but in your Power.

As for my own Part, Sir, I was observing to you towards the Beginning of my Letter, that had I establish'd a Correspondence with you, whilst I was in the upper Regions, it had, in all Probability, prevented both my own and my Master's Fate. I shall now shew you two Capital Errors into which I fell for want of consulting your EXCELLENCY, and in which I was not undeceived 'till too late, since I came here, by our *sooty-fac'd Monarch*, who not only severely reprimanded me for them, but was upon the Point of ordering me into the Hands of the *Furies*, to be corporally corrected, as an additional Punishment for my Stupidity, had I not very wisely cry'd *Peccavi*, and been in some Measure intitled to his Favour, for some of my good Deeds, during my Administration at the *Ottoman Porte*.

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THE two great Errors which I committed were these : I always thought that Persons of Merit and Honour were the best qualify'd, and fittest for publick Employments, wherefore whenever any of the great Offices of State became vacant, as my Master, the *Sultan*, left the Disposal of them to me, I always conferr'd them upon Men of the greatest Abilities and Integrity. But, Fool as I was, I never consider'd that Merit and Honour, which are inseparable Companions, are the very worst Qualifications in the World for the *Creatures* of a *Minister*, who may often have *dirty Work* to put them upon. Accordingly when I used to make some Proposals in the *Divan*, that would quadrate very well with my own *Interest*, tho' they were not perhaps so consistent with my *Master's Honour*, or the *Good of my Country*, these very Officers, tho' *Creatures* of my own making, would oppose me, and with an *Elegance* that always accompanies *Truth*, expose the *Absurdity* of my EXPEDIENTS.

PARTICULARLY I was ever very averse to *War*, well knowing I had no Talents that would Shine, or make my Administration necessary on such Occasions ; for which Reason I put up tamely with many *Insults* that were daily offer'd me by the *Franks*, which went very much against the Grain with our *Mussulmen*, who are no great Admirers or Practisers of the Doctrines of *Passive Obedience*, and *Non-Resistance*, but, like the *Old Romans*, love to Strike the first Blow. This therefore was one of the Occasions of my *Downfall*, and precipitated my *Ruin*.

THE other Oversight which I committed was, if possible, yet Greater : This was, that altho' my Country-men have been bred up Brutes and in Ignorance, and design to continue so *in omne volubile Tempus*, yet I must needs take it into my *blundering Head* to civilize them, and introduce polite Literature amongst them. To this end I encouraged *Printing*, and had several *Presses* set up in *Constantinople*, under the Direction of some

Turks, who, by conversing with the *Europeans*, had acquir'd a tolerable Share of Learning.

BUT I have since been convinced, by *woful Experience*, and might have been inform'd, had I consulted you, that whoever designs to *enslave a People of any Spirit*, must, as much as possible, keep them in Ignorance, and lay all the Discouragements imaginable upon any Person's *Writing*; or, if it were practicable, even *Speaking*, but who is on his own Side, and firmly attach'd to his Interest.

THESE two Rocks, upon which I was cast away, you great Sir, have very wisely and carefully avoided; for all must own, who have ever had the Honour and Happiness to be in the least acquainted with you, that *Merit and Honour* have not been the *Qualifications* which you have requir'd in the Persons upon whom you have been pleased to confer your Favours. No, no, you know the World better, and take care not to be mistaken in your Men; for which Reason

Reason you bestow no Reward, or Employments, upon such as will go through Stich, such whose Consciences are not over scrupulous, and will not boggle at any *Jobs*, be they ever so *Dirty*, which you shall think fit to exact from them. And indeed, it must be own'd to your Credit, that you have not often been out in your Judgment, but have pick'd out a Set of as stanch thorough-paced Seconds, as ever any honest *Fac-totum* was bless'd with.

LONG may you flourish, *most illustrious Don*, with your worthy Supports, 'till loaden with the Honours which you have so long and so justly deserved, you descend to the *Stygian* Ferry, where his infernal Majesty designs to shew you the most distinguishing Marks of his Favour, even so far, as I inform'd you before, as to make you his prime Minister, a Post which is now fill'd with Applause by the *great Machiavel*, to whom no Person is worthy to succeed but *Don Ruperto*.

I beg leave to congratulate you, Sir, upon the Advancement so justly design'd you, and shall be proud upon your Arrival here to learn the Arts of Government under so great a Master; that, if the *Pythagorean* System be true, and our Souls, after a certain Period of Time, transmigrate into other Bodies, and I can avoid drinking a Cup of the River *Lethe*, I may return into your upper Regions, and be the Astonishment and Admiration of Mankind, as you have long been, and in all Probability will always be, 'till you repair to these *dark Abodes*, these *joyless Mansions*, which are generally destin'd for the Reception of all the *prime Ministers* in the Universe, as they were amongst the Rest for your

Most Obsequious Slave and

Most Profound Admirer,

I B R A H I M B A S S A.

Don



Don Ruperto de Poli's

A N S W E R

T O

IBRAHIM BASSA.

From my Palace in the North of Utopia.

Thou poor Pedlar in Politicks,

I was not a little surpriz'd at the Receipt of a Letter from an unknown Correspondent in the *infernal Regions*, but I was much more so, when, upon the Perusal of the Contents, I found it came from the veryest Bungler of a Minister that ever disgrac'd that high Office.

W H Y

WHY what the *Deuce* cou'd put it into your Numscull to desire a Correspondence with me? You, I say, who having the finest Game in the World in your Hands, being upheld by the most absolute Monarch in the Universe, governing a People who are all born *Slaves*; and having a formidable Army at your Command, could yet play your Cards so ill as not only to fall a Sacrifice yourself to a Pack of Rabble, but to involve your Master, and your dearest and faithfullest Friends in your Ruin.

O! Had I been so Happy to have met with a Prince so able to protect me, and a People so well dispos'd for *Servitude*? What would I not have done? What Lengths would I not have run? Why even Cardinal *Costia*, or Prince *Menzikoff* would have not stumbled in so fair a Road as you had before you: What, have the *Sultan* and the *Mufti* in your Interest, and have it in your own Power to make the Army so, by giving the Command to none but your own *Tools*, and yet leave it in the Power of the
 Populace

Populace to call you to an Account? Why thou art a Shame and Scandal to all thy Tribe, and deservest the Fate thou so justly meetst with.

I must confess indeed, under the Rose be it spoken, that the *handsome Fortune* you had amass'd by *Oppressing your Country*, was a Sign of a tolerable Genius, and the Gaining over the *Mufti* to your Party, promis'd very well; insomuch, that I don't know what you might have done had you had me for your Tutor.

BUT was that enough for a Man of Spirit? Why, what would you have done had you been in my Case? How if you had had a Prince limited by the Laws of the Land, as much as the Meaneft of his Subjects, and naturally dispos'd to make them a happy People? A Prince whose Inclinations are virtuous and honourable, who abhors *Oppression* and *Corruption*; and to all this, has a discerning Judgment not easily to be impos'd upon; how would you then have plaid your Cards? Did it not require some Art to manage such a Game?

D

Y E T

YET had I not only all these Difficulties to struggle with, but a fierce free-born People, jealous of their Liberties to encounter, and the most powerful, most vigilant, and most incorrupt Adversaries to cope with ; Adversaries, who were superior to me in Birth, Fortune and Abilities, and who had vow'd my Destruction and Overthrow ; all which I baffled and eluded, nor do I in the least question doing the same again, as long as GOLD holds its *magnetick Virtue*.

NOR that I would have you imagine, when I talk of the *influencing Power of Gold*, that I am such a Fool as to dissipate my own Fortune, to secure and gain over any Friends to my Interest. No, as I have the Distribution of the *Finances*, I make use of the *publick Treasure* to work the *Destruction* of the *Publick*, and bribe my *Creatures* in a Manner with their own Money : Nor do I fear being call'd to any Account for Imbezzelements, because if any should be so weak as to attempt it, those
very

very Persons, by whose Sentence I am to stand, or fall, are firmly attach'd to me, by Motives too prevalent to be overcome, by the Eloquence and Reasoning even of an Angel; tho' he should have the most *glaring Truths* on his Side, such as would be convincing to every *disinterested Man*.

It was a Saying of that great Monarch, *Philip of Macedon*, (A Prince for whose Memory, by the bye, I have a much greater Veneration, than for that of that fighting Fool his Son *Alexander*) that no Fortrefs cou'd be impregnable into which a Passage could be found for an *Ass laden with Gold*. This is a Truth which I have often found by Experience to be infallible; accordingly it would be endless to enumerate to you the many surprizing Miracles which I have frequently work'd by the Means of *Asses laden with that bewitching Metal*. Believe me, when rightly apply'd, it has irresistible Charms, *Experto crede Ruperto*.

JUGURTHA likewise was very sensible of the incredible Power of Gold; for he found it of more service to him than all the Forces of his Kingdom, and therefore when his Arms were ineffectual against the *Romans*, had Recourse to this more prevalent Argument, which mollify'd great Part of the *Senate*, and to which he, in a great Measure, ow'd his Safety.

BUT I had forgot to take Notice of several material Passages in your Letter, which deserve my Animadversion; my Indignation against you for such capital and egregious Over-Sights as you were guilty of having led me into this long Digression. First then, I am not so blind but I can see you *Sneer*, thro' all your pretended Commendations and Flattery; and tho' it is plain you design'd to jeer me when you put me upon a Level with *Machiavel*; I can assure you were you to see the Panegyricks and Encomiums that are daily compos'd to my Honour, you would be convinc'd that you do me bare Justice, and scarcely that.

As

As for your saying that I have been long impatiently expected in your *Gloomy Regions*, I don't think my self at all oblig'd to you for your Compliment; and for all you are pleas'd to tell me that your *infernal Monarch* designs me such distinguishing Favours; you may depend upon it that I find myself so well where I am, that I will keep as long as I can out of his Clutches, and leave *Machiavel* to enjoy his exalted Dignity undisturb'd.

BESIDES, tho' those *dark Abodes*, those *joyless Mansions* may be destin'd for the Reception of such *infidel Ministers* as thou art, I would have thee to know that such an honest *Fac-totum*, as myself, a Man of such Integrity and Uprightness, who has always been able to clear himself from any foul Aspersions and Imputations of his Enemies whenever he has been call'd in Question, need not stand in Fear of ever crossing the *Stygian Ferry*, but hopes to mount *per aspera ad Astra*.

As

As for your taxing me with keeping a constant Correspondence with his *Plutonian* Majesty; and sending him Couriers every Week with Fresh and minute Accounts of my most Important Negotiations; 'tis well known that my Post obliges me to have an Intercourse with all the World, as well Enemies as Friends; for if I never treat with my Enemies, which Way is it possible for me ever to make them Friends? Besides, as a good old Woman, who was a zealous *Roman Catholick* said, when by Mistake she offer'd a Candle to the Devil, who happen'd to be plac'd next a Saint in one of the *Papish* Churches; 'tis good to have Friends every where, for who knows what may happen?

As for your Banter upon my renown'd Ancestor *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, to whom I am proud to be related, it favours very much of the Ignorance of your Country; for had you been in the least conversant with our *Beaux Esprits*, you would have known that the Story of the *Wind-mill*, the *Sheep*,
and

and the *Lyon*, were only Allegories under which that profound Politician *Michael Cervantes*, chose to paint the valorous and incomparable Adventures of that undaunted Knight, who was the Wonder of the Age he liv'd in, being prime Minister and Generalissimo to *Don Roderick* the Great, who was the Scourge and Terror of the *Moors*, as may still be seen in the Archives of *Granada*.

IN the next Place, when you proceed to compare our Adventures, you grow perfectly scurrilous, and were you in *Utopia* your Reflections should not escape unpunish'd ; but, poor *Wretch*, I pity thee, and scorn to push my Resentments beyond the Grave ; wherefore, let me ask you calmly what it is you mean by my engaging with *Windmills* of my own raising, towards the Beginning of every New Year for these ten Years?

ARE then all my Labours, Watchings and Toils, to avert the Storms impending over my dear Country so many *Windmills* in your Opinion ? But, thank Heaven,

ven, my Merits are better known, and otherwise esteem'd, ay, and rewarded too in *Utopia*; and the People, (*at least that Part of them who are in my Interest*, and for the Rabble I value them not) are very sensible, what terrible Invasions I have prevented, and what formidable Leagues were enter'd into by two great Potentates with Design to subvert our Liberties, and deprive us of all that was dear to us as *Utopians*; all which, notwithstanding I had the Address, to bring to nothing, and to turn their destructive Schemes upon their own Heads; which had I not done, I tremble to think what an Inundation of Foreigners would have pour'd in upon us, and overrun our ISLAND, in Spite of our NAVY, by the Help of CORK SHOES and SWIMMING GIRDLES.

You are afterwards pleas'd to say that I have had nothing but *Sheep* to deal with, but let me tell you Friend *Ibrahim*, had you had these same *Sheep* to have dealt with, you would have found them roaring *Lions*, seeking whom they may devour, and such *Lions*, as
even

my worthy Predecessor with all his Valour could not have vanquish'd; wherefore I was forc'd to have recourse to the Fox's Tale, and as *Medea* and *Aeneas* did with the *brazen Bulls* and *Cerberus*, I was oblig'd to lull some a-sleep with Opiats, and give a Sop to others; nay, I am still under a Necessity of using the same Methods, or otherwise these *Sheep*, as you are pleased to call them, *would turn again, and prey upon their Keeper.*

As to the *Lyons* with whom you allege I am surrounded as with Guards, I own it, and am proud of them; since I can assure you that by their Means I have render'd my self more formidable than my Master with all his Guards; and to let you into the Secret, had you had the Wit to have had a Set of *Lyons of the same Breed*, you had prevented the Insurrection at *Constantinople*, and consequently you had prevented both your own and your Master's Down-fall; for these *Lyons* have one particular good Quality, which is, that they give one timely Intelligence of all the Designs of one's Enemies; only it must be confess'd that they are somewhat inclin'd to be mischievous; and if

E they

they can't find any lawful Game to hunt down, will prey upon the first they meet, rather than be idle.

L A S T L Y, As to my two *doughty* 'Squires, (at whom you are pleas'd to *Sneer*) and whom I send upon all my Errands ; who but such an *Ignoramus* as you, would have thought to ridicule me for that which I esteem my greatest Glory ? Why, every *Bungler* can work if he has good *Tools* ; but I to shew my Dexterity make use of such *Wretches* as *no Man living would employ but my self* ; and yet I have surpriz'd and amaz'd the whole World with the Success of my Negotiations ; and lest you should not please to take my Word for it, I have herewith sent my Vouchers the R—— R——s—— and *Messieurs*—— O—— and W—— who will all aver, and, if need should be, swear that the great *Ximenes* and *Richlieu* were mere Babes in Politics when compar'd to me : In short, that I am the *greatest Statesman, the most profound Politician, the most disinterested Patriot, and the most upright and Incorrupt Fact-totum* that ever was at the Helm of Affairs, not excepting even those antiquated fellows *Moses, Joshua, or Samuel*. A s

As to the Admiral's vowing to be reveng'd on me, for sending him with his Hands ty'd, where himself perish'd, with a Thousand brave Fellows; if I can't say with a late *grand Monarque*, he *died for my Glory*, I am sure, at least, he *died for my Safety*. For had he liv'd to come Home, he might have told *scandalous Tales* that would not have redounded very much to my Honour.

As for *Macario*, it must be acknowledged, he did his Business effectually, and acted like Man of Resolution, who was above puny Scruples of Conscience. But, alas! To confess the Truth, he was dead, and I can get none but *Comards, Sycophants, and Milk-Sops* to enlist in my Service, my Enemies having engaged all the Men of Honour and Courage in theirs.

BUT to proceed, tho' you are pleas'd to stile the *infernal Regions* the *dark Abodes*, I find they have enlight'ned your Intellects, since you have at last discover'd the Force of that irresistible Weapon, call'd *Aurum Fulminans*, to which alone I am oblig'd for all my Grandeur; you are likewise sensible, Thanks to *Pluto*, of those egregious Errors which you committed in preferring Men of Merit, and encouraging

encouraging Learning, what in the Name of Folly, had you to do with Merit, or Learning? Did I ever ask any *Creatures* of mine whether they were Men of Learning, or did I ever enquire after their Merit? No, the only commendable Qualification I ever acquir'd is *Fidelity*; and that only to MYSELF; the other Qualities which I desire in them, are *an entire Compliance with any Measures which I propose; an absolute Resignation of their Understandings to mine; a consummate Impudence not easily to be put out of Countenance; and a supple Conscience that will strain at nothing.* Thus, tho' I never design, if I can help it, to visit your *joyless Mansions*, I have sent you such Instructions, that if you diligently observe them, and are permitted to return again to our Orb, will certainly aggrandize you and your Family; so bidding thee heartily farewell, if thou canst *in Inferis*,

I am,

Thine, at a Distance,

RUPERTO DE POLI.

FINIS.



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